



Security & YOU

Think.
Assess.
Protect.

Learning Minute: **Email**

Based on true stories from real-life at SNL

Setting the Scene...

Just before lunch, James remembered that he had promised to send some urgent information to three of his coworkers. He quickly drafted an email and attached an Unclassified Controlled Nuclear Information (UCNI) document and three Official Use Only (OUO) documents.

James only planned to send the email to SNL email addresses within the firewall, so he didn't encrypt it. However, he did properly mark the email with "UCNI and OUO attached."

Building the Action...

James started typing names into the “To” field, and selected the auto-completed email addresses as they popped up.

James started to type in “Romero” and quickly selected the first email address that came up, not realizing that he had selected his friend Will’s home email address instead of his work address. He hit “send.”

The Incident...

As the email disappeared, James realized that he hadn't reviewed the addresses before sending the message. He checked his sent email and discovered his mistake.

James had inadvertently sent unencrypted UCNI and OUO materials outside SNL's firewall. He immediately contacted the Security Incident Management Program (SIMP) for assistance.

Discussion Points...

- What actions led to this error?
- What could James have done to prevent it?
- What are the potential immediate and long-term consequences of this type of error?
- What can you do to avoid an error like this?

Learning Points

■ Time Pressure

- James acted carelessly because he was in a hurry. If he had remembered to complete the task earlier or had taken an extra moment to check his work, he could have avoided this kind of mistake.

■ Perception of Risk

- Although James was sending UCNI and OUO documents, he did not perceive a risk because he expected to only send them to sandia.gov addresses.
- Encrypting sensitive emails is always a good idea, even if you are only sending them within the firewall.

■ Establishing Routines

- James routinely addresses his work emails using the auto-complete function; however, he needs to establish a routine to review the addresses before he hits send. It only takes a moment.